Howland Wood - Curatorial

Voorhees, Russell Raymond
[Havana, Cuba]

1936-1938

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RUSSELL RAYMOND VOORHEES
PROFESSIONAL - WRITER - PHOTOGRAPHER
Travelling to and Covering All Countries and Colonies

Calle O'Reilly 29,
Habana, Cuba.
September 2, 1936

Howland Wood,
New York City, N.Y., U.S.A.

My dear Mr. Wood-

Many thanks for yours of the 28th of August. It ws very fine of you to give me so much valuable information and I know it will help me in picking up coins on my trip.

You need not worry about me paying too much. I am a hard boiled newspaperman. Was formerly one of the editors on the New York Journal of Commerce and have learned how to put the works on people when I buy anything. I have, on several occasions shamed Scotchmen and made they disgusted with their tradition so there isn't much chance that I will pay too much here. I speak Spanish like I do English, both the correct version and the parlor (pool parlor) version so I am able to put the works on the natives in their own lingo. The way my purchasing excursions generally work out is that the native pays me for taking the article along

I wondered, as I read your letter, whether there would be any chance of sending some coins to you on this basis, pay what they are worth to you without a lot of writing and red tape. I will take a chance on it on that basis for a starter, at least. Won't be sending anything too valuable, possibly only ordinary stuff but it all has some value even if only for cigarettes. If you want to see how this works out drop me a line and I will see what I can do. You have my word that I won't get peeved at anything and we both reserve the right to stop the negotiations at any time without invoking Article 7B of the New Deal program, whatever that might be.

What do you say?

Haven't seen New York City since about 1922. Is it as bad as ever? You might know I would make a crack like that. I was born in Newark, N.J.

Fraternally yours,

Russell Raymond Voorhees

September 9, 1936

Mr. Russell Raymond Voorhees,
Calle O'Reilly 29,
Habana, Cuba

Dear Mr. Voorhees:

I was much interested in your letter of September 2nd. If you can pick up coins cheap enough, well and good, but remember the present day price of silver is not what it used to be. Also remember that collectors do not care for coins in poor condition - that is, mutilated or badly worn. Where counterstamped coins are concerned, however, the coin may be worn but the counterstamp should be in clear, good shape. Holed coins, unless purposely done by official authority, are worth no more than their melting down value.

I am perfectly willing to take a chance and pay any coins you might pick up at a price. I would at least want to know about what you paid for them so that I at least could give you something over what you paid for them, that is, on ordinary stuff. Seeing what you pick up I could then tell you better what to avoid.

New York stood still for a while during the depression, with the exception of Radio City, which is more or less of a marvel, according to most people's opinion. Lately they are tearing up streets under various Relief Projects and just now it is a good place to avoid.

Very truly yours,

Curator

HW ks

Send him 1/50

Calle O'Reilly 29,
Habana, Cuba.
September 18, 1936

Mr. Howland Wood, Curator,
The American Numismatic Society,
New York City, N.Y., U.S.A.

Dear Mr. Wood-

Yours of the 9th received. I am glad that you are willing to try out my rather unusual plan. Let me say right here that whatever I send you is sent to you with the full and complete realization om my part that it is NOT a valuable collectiom of rare coins. I fully realize the mental attitude of the average person who picks up a few items of low value. So do not feel that you will have to explain to me that my sendings were of little value. I knew that first because I saw then before you did.

With thisletter I am sending you 11 little copper pieces that were taken from a convent here, I am told and also a rather worn USA silver piece. I knew before you told me the bane of worn pieces but I am sending this along with the copper peices just the same.

Now for the dirty work. The eleven copper pieces which look as if they had been through a siege of small pox cost me nothing. No, I didn't take them when nobody was looking, they were given to me. The USA piece I got in change, knowing I got it at the time but letting it go believing it was worth what it was dealt to me as at the least.

If you are interested in assuming ownership of this valuable??????????? cargo of coinage, you may send me one and two cent current unused USA stamps for whatever you feel inclined and the Habana branch of this swapping enterprise will be quite satisfied.

Fraternally yours,

Russell Raymond Voorhees

September 24, 1936

Mr. Russell Raymond Voorhees,
Calle O'Reilly,
29, Havana, Cuba

Dear Mr. Voorhees:

Your letter with the coins came the other day. It is a funny thing but we have received at two different times this same kind of coins that were found in a cornerstone of a monastery in Havana. They are virtually worthless as nobody really bothers to collect these little things, but somebody may come in and I can tell them the story and possibly sell the lot for 50¢. The dime you sent is only worth 10¢.

If I sell them I will send you the amount in stamps.

Very truly yours,

Curator

HW ks

October 5, 1936

Mr. Russell Raymond Voorhees,
Calle O'Reilly 29,
Habana, Cuba

Dear Mr. Voorhees:

I am herewith enclosing $1.50 in stamps as per your request for the 11 small copper coins and the 10¢ piece which you sent September 18th. I thought at the most I would get about 50¢ for these copper pieces but managed to sell them to someone for $1.35. The other 15¢ is for the dime.

Very truly yours,

Curator

HW ks
ENCL.

Calle O'Reilly 29,
Habana,--Cuba.
October 14th, 1936

Howland Wood,
New York City, N.Y., U.S.A.

Dear Mr. Wood-

I thought I was good but am perfectly willing to take a back seat when I meet a better man thanbI am. And you are he. You certainly did yourself proud by that copper coin deal and my only regret is that you were not on tap when the deal for little Old New York was made. I am sure the Indians would have had to pay you to take the dog gone island instead of having the purchaser pay for it, even if the purchase price was not so much. In all events I thank you very much and will be on the lookout for something more.

Failed to ask you in former letterif paper money interests you. There are some of the old Spanish bills here in all denominations from a few centavos up to pesos. Can pick them up around thirty cents for a hundred bills, the cost to me without any mailing expense. That is what I have to pay for them which is a hundred BILLS and NOT a hundred pesos. If you can use some or think you can I will send you a little mailing.

Once more let me thank you for your very fine performance on the copper cents. What a shame there are not more convents here?

Fraternally yours,

Russell Raymond Cookes

October 19, 1936

Mr. Russell Raymond Voorhees,
Calle O'Reilly 29,
Habana, Cuba

Dear Mr. Voorhees:

Your letter just at hand. I am glad that you liked the bargain I drove for those pieces you sent up. I really got too much because I feel sure the next time you send up anything I will not do so well by you. In other words, I made too good a start.

Don't send up any of that Cuban paper money because the small denominations, anyway, are very common around here and nobody wants them. They must have made them by the ton.

Sometime when you are sending up something I wish you would send up a brand new absolutely perfect 1936 peso or any other denomination dated 1936.

Very truly yours,

Curator

HW ks

Calle O'Reilly 29,
Habana, Cuba.
March 13th, 1937

Mr. Howard Wood, Curator,
Am. Nusmismatic Society,
New York City, N.Y., U.S.A.

Dear Mr. Wood-

I suppose you think I died after that last remittance and letter but such is not the case. Besides being a writer I am a field naturalist and have been pretty busy of late in the field gathering specimens.

I suppose, now that the majority in 46 out of the 48 states have re-elected the great Gold Brick man Roosevelt that these Spanish bills of which I sent you some will sell like hot cakes and for a small fortune. Inasmuch as I could use a fortune, small or large, I am sending you, herewith, another lot of32 bills, some of smaller demeniation than the last lot. Here's hoping you can put the works on some unsuspecting and show me that you are not a one time man when it comes to puting over a bargain.

Here in Cuba there is practically no ying in the way of money that would interest you although I have not forgotten you and am always on the lookout. Before long I will go to Haiti and the Dominican Republic and I feel sure that I can find something there.

In a previous letter you asked me for some new Cuban coins. If you still want them, give me a list of the denominations and dates you wish and I will get them for you immediately and send them to you.

For the enclosed you may send me one and two cent unused USA stamps, when, if and as they are sold as the boys say down in Wall Street.

Fraternally yours,

Russell Raymond Voorhees

Dr. Russell Raymond Voorhees

Mar. 13 - 1937

Dear Mr. Wood:-

In the rush to get your letter off this noon, I didn't give you full details regarding the stamps I prefer when pay time comes around for the bills I send you.

If it isn't too much trouble I would prefer Commemoratives in any value up to and including 5¢ U.S.A. Mint, of course. I do not expect any out of circulation commemoratives - only those that are obtainable at the P.O. today. I can make a turn with those in these countries so would appreciate it, if possible if you would send me such, any Commemoratives - up to & including 5¢ value.

Fraternally,

Porter

April 12, 1937

Dr. Russell Raymond Voorhees,
Calle O'Reilly 29,
Habana, Cuba

Dear Dr. Voorhees:

Please pardon my not replying to your letter of March 13th. I have been so busy of late that I have not been able to keep up with my correspondence.

I am going to have a tough time realizing anything on the notes you sent up for the main and simple reason, as I think Penrod used to say, that these pieces are extremely common and as there is no one collecting them, they go begging. They must have issued them by the millions judging from the numbers I have seen. I will see when I get a chance what I can do in palming them off, but as most of them are in such poor condition I may not have any luck. I may find some small fry who will take them at a bargain to give away as premiums or something like that.

The Cuban coins we have are as follows:

Peso	1915, 1916, 1932, 1934, 1935
40 Centavos	1915, 1916, 1920
20 "	1915, 1916, 1920, 1932
10 "	1915, 1916, 1920
5 "	1915, 1916, 1920
2 "	1915, 1916
1 Centavo	1915, 1916, 1920

I would not care for any unless in very nice condition. If you can find other dates I would appreciate it and the next time I go down town I will see what I can do with your notes.

If when and how I remit, I will send you commemorative stamps. The trouble is that most of the commemoratives nowadays, unless you keep going to the postoffice, are off center, which are only good for putting on letters.

Very truly yours,

Curator

HW ks

ACTIVITIES COVER
THE ENTIRE WORLD

SPECIALIZING IN
LATIN AMERICA

DR. RUSSELL RAYMOND VOORHEES
NATURALIST -- EXPLORER -- TRAVELER
AUTHOR - PHOTOGRAPHER

Calle O'Reilly 29,
Habana, Cuba.
Jan. 15-1938

Mr. Howland Wood,
New York City, N.Y., U.S.A.

Dear Friend:

Just a line to ask regarding the Spanish bills that you have had for so long. If you have sold them, kindly remit in mint U.S.A. postage stamps of 1-2 + 3¢ value. If unsold would you be so kind as to return them to me, inasmuch as I have an immediate cash market for them.

Also let me know if you are still in the market for Cuban coins. I have yours of April 12-37, which lists the coins you have. If there are additions, let me know &

also advise if interested in fine condition coins of any dates not on list.

Will then see what I can get at the Treasury here.

Fraternally,

Russell Raymond Cooper

Jr

Coin Room

February 3, 1938.

Dr. Russell Raymond Voorhees,
Calle O'Reilly 29,
Habana, Cuba.

Dear Dr. Voorhees:

I regret, very much, to inform you of the death of Mr. Wood. He had a severe attack of pneumonia and passed away on the 4th of January. Affairs here are, as you may appreciate, very unsettled.

In going through the correspondence on his desk I find your envelope, addressed to Mr. Wood, with twenty-eight bills in it. I am returning them herewith.

Very truly yours,

Wm. L. Clark,
Assistant Curator,

WLC ew
Enclosure.